

# CHAPTER 2 – ALTERNATIVES

## Introduction

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This chapter describes and compares the alternatives considered for the **Sierra National Forest Travel Management EIS**. It describes the five alternatives considered in detail as well as those eliminated from detailed study. At the end of this chapter the alternatives and their environmental impacts are displayed in summary tables so that they can be readily compared.

Based on the issues identified through public comment on the proposed action, the Forest Service developed three alternative proposals that achieve the purpose and need differently from the proposed action. In addition, the Forest Service is required to analyze a no action alternative. The proposed action, alternatives and no action alternative are described in detail below.

## Terminology and Abbreviations

This chapter contains the following terminology and abbreviations as defined in the Travel Management Rule, Forest Service Manual (FSM) and Forest Service Handbook (FSH):

### **Roads Open to Highway Legal Vehicles Only:**

- Roads maintained for passenger cars,
- Meeting the Highway Safety Act of 1988 and
- Operated under California Vehicle Code (CVC) for registered highway vehicles and licensed drivers.

### **Roads Open to All Vehicles (mixed use):**

- Roads maintained for high clearance vehicles (maintenance level 2),
- Meeting prudent safety standards,
- Considered rough graded by California Highway Patrol,
- Operated under CVC Division 16.5 for State allowed OHVs and permitted operators and
- Considered **mixed use** under Forest Service definitions.

NOTE: passenger cars may use these roads, but they are not maintained for them.

**Roads Closed to All Vehicles:** Roads closed year round to public access. This may include roads restricted for environmental concerns, roads open for permittee use or administrative sites.

### **Trails Open to Vehicles Greater than 50 Inches:**

- Travelway managed for a recreation experience only.

### **Trails Open to Vehicles Less Than 50 Inches:**

- Travelway managed for a recreation experience only and
- Open only to State legal vehicles use such as ATVs, quads and motorcycles.

### **Trails Open to Motorcycles Only:**

- Travel way managed for a recreation experience only and
- Open to State legal motorcycles only.

**Combined Use Roads, (a special case of the Highway Vehicle Road):**

- Roads maintained for passenger cars,
- Meeting the Highway Safety Act of 1988,
- Operated under CVC for registered highway vehicles and licensed drivers and
- Allows limited OHV use under CVC 38026.

**Cross-country Travel:** Motor vehicle travel off designated NFTS roads, trails and areas.

**Motorized Use Area:** Area on National Forest System land that is designated for motor vehicle use pursuant to 36 CFR 212.51 and on a Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM).

**Unauthorized Route:** A road or trail that is not a forest road or trail or a temporary road or trail and that is not included in a forest transportation atlas.

## Chapter 2 Organization

The chapter is divided into four parts:

- Part 1 describes how the alternatives were developed.
- Part 2 presents the alternatives considered in detail.
- Part 3 presents the alternatives that were considered, but eliminated from detailed analysis. It includes the rationale for eliminating these alternatives.
- Part 4 compares the alternatives based on their environmental, social and economic consequences and includes a comparative display of the projected effects of the alternatives.

## Maps

One map for each alternative can be found in Appendix K. In the electronic version of Appendix K (on CD and on the Web: <http://www.fs.us.fed/t5/sierra/projects/ohv> ), these maps have a zoom feature to aid the reader in discerning details. Also, Appendix L includes a crosswalk of each proposed route and area to its USGS quadrangle map.

## Part 1 – How the Alternatives were Developed\_\_\_\_\_

The four action alternatives represent a wide range of perspectives designed to address the issues as described in the purpose and need (Chapter 1).

### Refining Alternatives Submitted by the Public during Scoping

During the 80-day public scoping process, alternative concepts were submitted for consideration by two groups. One group primarily expressed concerns about ensuring adequate motorized recreation opportunities; the other was primarily focused on resource protection. The resulting alternatives incorporate these and other suggestions offered by the public.

Also important in this process was the information gathered by the Forest Service in their consultation and discussions with tribal representatives, local counties and Forest Service employees. State and Federal agencies advised the process through numerous informal contacts.

## Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures are specific actions that are proposed to avoid, reduce or eliminate potential effects from the action alternative. Mitigations have been analyzed for their potential to reduce or eliminate effects on specific resources associated with motorized use of the routes. These effects are disclosed in the resource sections of Chapter 3. All action alternatives incorporate mitigation measures and are listed in Appendix A, which lists each route and the associated mitigation measure code. In addition, mitigation measures are described in detail in Appendix B. Mitigations described for specific routes include but are not limited to:

- **Barriers** - Large boulders or other imported material, placed in close proximity to road or designated route prism, designed to keep vehicle traffic on designated routes. Specification of mechanical or hand equipment requirements are listed in Appendix A.
- **Drainage** - Construct waterbars, dips or other water diversion feature designed to prevent water from flowing along the tread and causing erosion. Space drainage features for appropriate gradient and soils or heavy maintenance of existing drainage structures.
- **Hardening** - Stabilize tread through placement of rocks, cobbles or gravels, providing for adequate drainage, to eliminate or prevent erosion of tread material.
- **Maintenance Activities** - Maintenance activities on unauthorized that are necessary in order to bring the route up to applicable standards.
- **Restoration/Stabilization of Trail Tread** - Reshape, revegetate and /or mulch segment of trail using mechanized equipment to reestablish trail tread. To be most effective, these maintenance activities often need to be accomplished when there is adequate soil moisture.
- **Mechanized and Hand Culvert Repair** - Repair and/or replace with appropriate crossing for proper channel functioning.
- **Minor Realignment** - Align designated route within 49 feet (15 meters) of existing centerline to an alignment which avoids impact to a natural or cultural resource.
- **Seasonal Restrictions** - Closure of a route or road to public vehicle travel for a specified time of year, to avoid impacts to forest resources, road infrastructure, reduction of maintenance needs or cost or a combination of these.
- **Signage** - Placement of one of a variety of educational and enforcement signs, aimed at limiting off-route travel, parking or other activities that could otherwise affect forest resources.
- **Sediment Filter** - Provide sediment filter/energy dissipater using hand work.
- **Specifications** - Specifications for how work should be conducted, including items such as using mechanized equipment during a period with adequate soil moisture, limited operating periods for wildlife protection, and/or consultation with resource specialists prior to implementing work
- **Stream Channel Stabilization** - Hardening of tread surface at approaches and live water crossings, using a mix of place rocks, cobbles and/or gravels of size appropriate to stream flow. May include minor support of stream banks immediately adjacent to designated route or trail.

- Stream Crossing Structure and Low Water Structure - Install crossing structure (bridge, bottomless arch, single or multiple culverts) that provides for proper channel function and passage of flow and aquatic organisms. Use of mechanized equipment is probable.
- Weed Treatment - Eradicate weeds (as described in Chapter 3 Noxious Weeds section) using manual (no herbicide) treatment of population for a specified period of time, depending on species.

## Implementation of Mitigation Measures

Mitigations will be implemented as described in Appendix A, where they are applied to proposed NFTS facilities (roads/trails/areas). For routes or areas that need mitigation(s) prior to opening; the route will appear as a designated public motorized road, trail, or area on the next revision of the MVUM after the prescribed mitigations are completed. Scheduling of mitigations is based on the following considerations:

1. Roads and trails where the location or deteriorated condition is causing substantial effects to riparian, watershed, threatened, endangered or sensitive species, or significant cultural resources whether or not motorized vehicle use is occurring.
2. Mitigations on routes requiring relatively low-cost, easily implemented work (such as signage or simple barriers) when mitigations must occur prior to public use.
3. Roads and trails that provide connectivity and important access for the transportation network or other routes that have been identified as providing key public benefit and opportunities, and which require mitigation before designation.

## Monitoring

Monitoring is critical for evaluating the effectiveness of management decisions and the accuracy of analysis assumptions and conclusions. Monitoring of road and trail conditions is required and must meet regional and/or National standards. If monitoring determines additional resource damage is occurring, steps to prevent further damage must be taken. If the mitigations measures are not effective or are not possible, road or trail closures may be required (this may require additional NEPA analysis). Monitoring requires establishment of a condition baseline prior to project implementation and gathers data for future management decisions. Once implementation begins, more effective monitoring elements may be identified and implemented.

Proposed monitoring is described in Appendix B: Mitigations Measures and Monitoring, Table B-1. Specific application of monitoring as mitigation is identified for each proposed route and use area in Appendix A.

**Aquatic Wildlife:** Monitoring to accompany mitigation measures would occur along routes and use areas added to the NFTS that have been identified as “at risk” to aquatic species due to proximity of a facility to stream, riparian, meadow and other sensitive habitats (see Chapter 3). These areas have the greatest potential for adverse effects. Trails monitored may vary from year to year and may coincide with monitoring requirements in the LRMP. If negative impacts are documented, appropriate mitigation measures would be developed and implemented.

**Botanical Resources - Sensitive Plants:** Monitoring would occur along routes and use areas added to the NFTS that have been identified as a high risk to sensitive plants (see Chapter 3 and Biological Evaluation in the project record). These areas have the greatest potential for adverse effects. Sites monitored may vary from year to year. If negative impacts are documented, appropriate mitigation measures would be developed and implemented.

**Cultural Resources:** All of the at-risk cultural sites in the area of potential effect of proposed additions to the NFTS were monitored to determine their current condition and risk of adverse effects (see Chapter 3 and the Archaeological Reconnaissance Reports in the project record). In addition to the specific application of monitoring as a mitigation measure (Appendix B), the Forest Service Policy for Section 106 of the NHPA Compliance in Travel Management: Designated Routes for Motor Vehicle Use (USDA-FS, 2005) requires the development and implementation of a monitoring plan within one year of route designation. This plan would include monitoring of all at-risk historic properties, including those where monitoring was prescribed as a mitigation measure and a percentage of other historic properties within the NFTS.

**Noxious Weeds:** Monitoring would occur on routes and use areas added to the NFTS that have been identified as vulnerable to noxious weed spread (see Chapter 3) per the SNF LRMP, as amended by the 2004 Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment. These areas have the greatest potential for adverse effects. Sites monitored may vary from year to year. If negative impacts are documented, appropriate mitigation measures would be developed and implemented.

**Road and Trail Conditions:** Trails may be monitored by both SNF employees and public volunteers in partnership with the SNF to document trail conditions, based on field observations and measurements. Information derived from this monitoring is used to update the maintenance schedule and assist in prioritizing maintenance needs.

**Soils and Water Resources:** The implementation and effectiveness of the specified mitigation measures will be monitored using the USFS Pacific Southwest Region Best Management Practices Evaluation Program (BMPEP) protocols at randomly selected sites. In addition to randomly selected locations, monitoring will be conducted along routes that have been specifically identified as a potentially higher risk for erosion due to increased motorized use after designation (see Appendix B). This monitoring will determine whether there is a need for additional BMPs to protect soil and watershed resources in the long term. The BMPEP protocols and California State OHV Commission Green-Yellow-Red monitoring protocol would be used to evaluate whether these trails are impacting soil or water resources. These evaluations were developed to monitor the condition and drainage features of road surfaces and road/stream crossings. Appropriate mitigation measures derived from monitoring results would be developed and implemented as needed and may require additional NEPA.

**Terrestrial Wildlife:** Monitoring to accompany mitigation measures would occur along routes and use areas added to the NFTS that have been identified as at risk of noise disturbance to specific wildlife species (see Chapter 3). Sites monitored may vary from year to year and may coincide with monitoring of species populations under the conditions of the LRMP. If negative impacts are documented, appropriate mitigation measures would be developed and implemented.

**Water Quality:** Water quality monitoring is conducted to establish baseline conditions for comparison to water quality objective thresholds for sediment, turbidity, temperature and dissolved oxygen and to compare any future change in these parameters and the effect to beneficial use. Baseline data will be collected and include Stream Condition Inventory (SCI) plots where applicable and V\* sediment ratings for perennial streams located in relatively high use subwatersheds and/or subwatersheds that are at or will exceed the lower threshold of concern for cumulative watershed effects. Measurements of temperature, dissolved oxygen and turbidity will also be taken in these survey reaches. These surveys will be conducted on a schedule as described in the Water Quality Monitoring Plan. Should the relevant water quality objectives be exceeded as identified through monitoring, additional mitigation actions will be implemented.

## Common to All Alternatives

### Special Areas

Special areas are defined in the Forest Plan (LRMP). Per the LRMP some of those special areas are managed to prohibit additional motor vehicle use. No additional routes or areas have been proposed to be added in any of the applicable special areas. For example, the Kings River Special Management Area (SMA) was established in 1987 as a result of Public Law 100-150. The 1987 law states that “the Kings River SMA Plan shall permit off-road vehicular use of off-road trails to the same extent and in the same locations as was permitted before November 3, 1987.” There were no off-road trails designated in this area before November 3, 1987.

### Trail and Road Maintenance

Trail and road maintenance standards are described in Forest Service Policy documents. National Quality Standards for Trails can be found in the Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 2309.18, section 15 and referenced in the Forest Service Manual (FSM) 2353.15. Road Maintenance Standards can be found in FSM 7730 and FSH 7709.58. Trail and Road Maintenance Standards are fully described in Appendix G.

### Trail Maintenance Expectations

Several different types of equipment or methods could be employed to accomplish this maintenance, including, but not limited to: trail tractor, installation of hardened surfaces, chainsaw and shovel work. A summary of the particular trail maintenance expectations for proposed trails in the project area are:

- Inspections and trail condition surveys to determine specific maintenance needs.
- Clearing vegetation to appropriate width for vehicle type. This practice provides for safety to the user and protects the tread and adjacent resources by discouraging routes around (e.g. in the case of a downed tree blocking the trail).
- Reconstruction or rehabilitation of improvements (e.g. drainage structures, hardened tread, cribwalls or bridges) to protect the trail tread and the adjacent resources (e.g. cultural resources) or functions (e.g. stream channel).
- Installation of items such as barriers, directional and informational signing to delineate the trail where needed for user safety, prevention of expansion of trail tread and/or resource protection.
- Stabilize tread to allow for steep gradient (within trail standards per FSM) by installing improvements (e.g. block, geotech materials, etc).
- Minor realignment within 49 feet (15 meters) of existing centerline to allow for steep gradient (within trail standards per FSM).

### Road Maintenance Expectations

The SNF operates and maintains NFTS roads in a manner that meets road management objectives and provides for:

1. Safe and efficient travel;
2. Access for the administration, utilization and protection of NFS lands; and
3. Protection of the environment, adjacent resources and public investment.

Road management objectives (RMO) are the compilation of the intent for a particular road resulting from all management decisions and operation requirement to meet those decisions. This information includes the description of the road, intended uses, physical requirements necessary to meet those uses, maintenance level and the specific operating periods for the road.

Roads are assigned a maintenance level from one thru five and are generally described as:

**Maintenance level one (ML1)** roads are closed year round to all traffic and only open during a specific project. The only maintenance expected is to preserve the road investment and minimize adverse resource affects.

**Maintenance level two (ML2)** roads are open to use by high clearance vehicles. Passenger cars are allowed, but that use is not a maintenance consideration.

**Maintenance level three (ML3)** roads are open and maintained for travel by a prudent driver in a standard passenger car. Comfort and convenience is not a consideration. They must meet the Highway Safety Act standards.

**Maintenance level four (ML4)** roads are open and maintenance for travel by standard passenger car and provide a moderate degree of user comfort and convenience. They must meet the Highway Safety Act standards.

**Maintenance level five (ML5)** roads are open and maintained for passenger cars and provide high degree of user comfort, convenience and mobility. They must meet the Highway Safety Act standards.

The specific characteristics defining the maintenance levels (ML) are:

- Service Life
- Traffic Type
- Vehicle Type
- Traffic Volume
- Typical Surface
- Travel Speed
- User Comfort
- Functional Classification
- Traffic Service Level
- Traffic Management Strategy

A full description of these road maintenance levels may be found in Appendix I.

Each road maintenance level has a general set of prescription guidelines used to direct the work activities in a consistent manner. These activities are as follows and may be found in more detail in Appendix I:

- General
- Travelway
- Shoulder
- Drainage
- Roadway
- Roadside
- Structures
- Traffic Service

Annually the SNF develops a Road Maintenance Plan to prioritize road maintenance activities within the current funding resources and needs of the Forest. Typically, road required to meet the Highway Safety Act (ML3 thru ML5) are the higher priorities for attention.

## Conversion of NFTS Roads to Motorized Trails

Typically, NFTS roads converted to trails, as well as unauthorized routes added to the NFTS as trails, already have characteristics and conditions that match with the vehicle class specified. This includes width, roughness and experiential attributes. Designation as a motorized trail will ensure

that future management and maintenance actions will maintain desired trail characteristics over time.

In very few circumstances, especially in Alternative 5, where unauthorized routes are added to enhance the recreation experience in response to public comments, characteristics of some routes may need to be modified over time to match the specified vehicle class. The approach to manage for development of trail characteristics generally includes signage and enforcement for the appropriate vehicle type, while allowing use and natural conditions to define the trail characteristics over time. Future management, if necessary, may include barriers to restrict the width of vehicles using a trail or changing the tread surface conditions to limit use to the appropriate trail vehicle. If future ground disturbing activities are needed, appropriate site specific analysis will be conducted.

## Part 2 – Alternatives Considered in Detail

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Four action alternatives (Alternatives 2, 3, 4 and 5) and a no action alternative (Alternative 1) are analyzed in detail in this DEIS. The no action alternative represents the continuation of cross-country travel where it is currently allowed. For the purpose of this analysis, it would be expected that currently inventoried unauthorized routes and areas would continue to be used by motor vehicles. Additional routes and areas would also be expected to proliferate over time. This alternative serves as a baseline for comparison among the alternatives and is required by the implementing regulations of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The planning area for the alternatives includes most of the National Forest System lands on the Sierra National Forest with the exclusion of designated wilderness areas. To aid the analysis and the reader, these lands are separated into ten analysis units (Table 3 and Figure 3) and are considered the project area. It does not include any private, State or other Federal lands.

Each alternative assumes that other adjacent Federal lands, such as those administered by the Bureau of Land Management, will be managed according to existing management plans and applicable Federal laws. Each alternative also assumes that private lands will meet applicable State and Federal land use regulations.

## Descriptions of the Alternatives

This section describes each of the five alternatives considered in detail. Each alternative is described in four parts:

1. **Cross-country Travel:** All of the action alternatives prohibit cross-country travel except in smaller use areas that are specifically designated for such use. The definition of a use area is described below and specific proposed areas are presented in the following alternative descriptions under “Additions to the National Forest System.”
2. **Additions to the NFTS:** Each alternative includes lists of roads, trails and use areas that are proposed for addition to the NFTS. Each of these roads and trails is identified by a unique road number or route ID and use areas are identified by name and location. All proposed route additions have an assigned maintenance level based on specific road or trail management objectives and any applicable vehicle class and season of use. All proposed routes would receive the appropriate level of routine maintenance such as brushing, signing, cleaning and clearing debris. Each road, trail or area is site specifically addressed in Appendix A (summary) and the project record where site specific reviews by resource specialists are documented. Resource specialists reviewed all proposed routes and use areas to determine site specific impacts. For some routes and areas, no work beyond routine maintenance is needed. For others, additional work is needed to bring the



- route or area up to a safe and environmentally sustainable condition. Where specific actions (mitigation measures) are identified for a given road or trail, such actions must be completed prior to designation of the road or trail for public motorized use.
3. **Changes to the Existing NFTS:** The NFTS vehicle class, season of use and operating traffic rules may vary between alternatives.
  4. **Non-significant Forest Plan Amendment:** Proposal for a non-significant Forest Plan (LRMP) amendment to allow some of the proposed route additions to the NFTS to be designated within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class Semi-Primitive, Non-motorized area as defined in the LRMP.

## Alternative 1 – No Action

The no action alternative provides a baseline for comparing the other alternatives. Under the no action alternative, current management consists of managing off-highway use as determined by the LRMP direction. Current LRMP direction guides the forest to develop a new Forest OHV Plan that designates an OHV route system to replace the 1977 Off Road Vehicle (ORV) Plan (USDA-FS 1991, 4.3.4 Recreation pp 4-3). Provisions of the 1977 ORV Plan remain in effect (until this Travel Management decision is implemented). The 1977 plan identifies areas where motorized travel was prohibited or where motorized travel was restricted to designated routes. On the Sierra National Forest these areas can be described as lands approximately above 6800 feet elevation. In this alternative, 660,000 acres of National Forest System lands would remain open to motorized cross-country use (See Figure 1. Areas Where Motorized Cross-country Travel is Currently Prohibited).

Current management of the NFTS is defined under the Sierra National Forest 1998 Road Closure Plan and implemented by Forest Order R5-83-3. To more accurately reflect the current NFTS in this DEIS, modifications to the 1998 Road Closure Plan are incorporated into the current NFTS based on project specific NEPA decisions implemented between 1998 and 2009. Modifications include road decommissioning and application of seasonal closures to some roads. The current NFTS will be described throughout the remainder of this DEIS as the current NFTS (as modified). Actions are listed in Table 4.

No changes would be made to the current NFTS (as modified) and no cross-country travel prohibition would be put into place. The Travel Management Rule would not be implemented and no MVUM would be produced. Motor vehicle travel by the public would not be limited to designated routes, except within areas described in the 1977 ORV Plan and forest order. Unauthorized routes would continue to have no status or authorization as NFTS facilities. Table 4 describes a summary of actions proposed in Alternative 1. Current seasonal closure information on existing NFTS roads is summarized in Table 5.

1. **Cross-country Travel:** Motor vehicle travel off the designated NFTS roads and NFTS trails and areas by the public would continue except as currently prohibited by forest order.
2. **Additions to the NFTS:** No additions would be made to the NFTS under this alternative.
3. **Changes to the existing NFTS:** No changes to the current NFTS (as modified) or the current Forest Plan (LRMP) direction are proposed in this alternative. The following seasonal restrictions are contained within the 1998 Forest Road Closure Plan (as modified) and would be continued. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of roads and closure types.

**Table 4. Alternative 1 – Summary of Actions**

Action Type	Action Proposed
1. Cross-country travel	No change from current management; cross-country travel is allowed
2. Additions to the NFTS	
a. Trails added	None
b. Roads added	None
c. Motorized Area(s) added	None
3. Changes to the NFTS	
a. Vehicle Class (Changes to vehicle class from highway legal only to mixed use (both highway-legal and non-highway legal allowed))	No change from current management
b. Passenger car roads altered to meet high clearance conditions	No change from current management
c. Passenger car roads not altered due to low mixed use safety risk	No change from current management
d. Season of use	No change from current management
4. Non-significant Forest Plan (LRMP) Amendment	None

\* **Number of Roads:** NFTS roads have been categorized and counted in various tables in this DEIS. First, when a number (total or aggregate) of NFTS roads is identified within an alternative description table it refers to individually named NFTS roads with the same vehicle use and seasonal open period. Secondly, in cases where the same NFTS named road has segments with different vehicle use or open period, each is considered and counted as a unique item for the purposes of these tables (Table 5, Table 12, Table 13, Table 20, Table 21, Table 22, Table 23, Table 29, Table 30, Table 31). It should be noted that in the displayed tables, the sum for “number of roads” columns may not reflect the actual number of roads, due to the accounting practice described in this paragraph.

**Table 5. Alternative 1 – Season of Use Grouped by Date and Vehicle Use (Existing NFTS Roads) per 1998 Road Closure Plan (as modified)**

Season of Use		Miles	Number of Road Segments
From	To		
2-Apr	30-Nov	28.1	3
2-Apr	31-Dec	18.6	7
21-Apr	30-Sept	15.1	3
21-Apr	30-Sept	0.5	1
21-Apr	30-Nov	147.1	52
2-May	30-Nov	66.3	23
16-May	14-Sep	0.3	1
21-May	30-Sept	25.8	17
21-May	30-Nov	31.3	8
23-May	30-Sept	1.9	1
31-May	30-Sept	34.0	3
2-Jun	30-Sept	0.7	1
2-Jun	14-Nov	5.8	3
16-Jun	30-April	5.0	3
16-Jun	14-Sep	2.7	1
16-Jun	30-Sept	8.2	3
1-July	30-Sept	11.5	3

Season of Use		Miles	Number of Road Segments
From	To		
2-Jul	14-Sep	5.9	2
2-Jul	30-Sept	2.8	1
2-Jul	14-Oct	2.6	2
2-Jul	30-Sept	21.4	9
16-Jul	30-Sept	2.2	1
2-Aug	30-April	1.1	2
2-Aug	30-June	5.0	4
16-Aug	30-Nov	4.7	1
1-Dec	30-Sept	23.4	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>472.0</b>	<b>165</b>

## Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

The proposed action entails the proposed changes to the NFTS and the prohibition of cross-country travel as described in the NOI published September 11, 2007 (Volume 72, Number 175) with some modifications. After further analysis and public input in response to the NOI, discrepancies in the published proposed action were identified. The proposed action has been modified to accurately reflect the proposed changes to the NFTS. These modifications are described below:

- Eight routes totaling 2.7 miles inaccurately categorized as unauthorized, are now accurately included as the true (full or partial) alignment of existing NFTS roads. JH-73, AE-32, KD-220, JH-02x, SR-82, SV25, KD-19 and KD-19a are not included in the modified proposed action calculations.
- The NOI inaccurately described 6 miles of proposed additions to the NFTS trail system. These 6 miles are actually proposed additions to the NFTS road system.
- Proposed changes to seasonal use describe the existing situation. The 1998 closure plan established seasonal closures for 472 miles and will be used as the existing situation for comparison.
- Five routes, totaling approximately 4 miles, were erroneously included in the proposed action (as published in the NOI). Routes SV-4, JM-17z, JM-1y (Westfall analysis unit), TH-47z, (Globe analysis unit) and ES1 (Jose-Chawanakee analysis unit) were removed from the proposed action (Alternative 2) because they were not consistent with the LRMP for watershed or sensitive wildlife habitat reasons (See project record for further detail.).
- Route names (e.g. Footman) that were used to identify routes in the proposed action were not carried forward, rather, the ID numbers (e.g. TH-25w) were used to track and analyze routes in this DEIS. A crosswalk of these route names to their route ID numbers is provided in Appendix L.

Alternative 2 meets the objective of prohibiting cross-country travel. Routes proposed for addition in Alternative 2 contribute to the following variety of the riding experience: motorcycle (7 percent), ATV and quads (50 percent) and four-wheel drive (43 percent). The range of motorized recreation difficulty is easy (50 percent), moderate (36 percent) and difficult (13 percent). In some areas, there are opportunities for extended riding time with access to loops and a larger network of roads and motorized trails.

to the NFTS (0.77 miles) within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized area as defined in the LRMP (USDA-FS 1991). Table 6 describes the summary of actions proposed in Alternative 2.

**1. Cross-country Travel:** This alternative would prohibit motor vehicle travel off the designated NFTS roads, trails and areas by the public except as allowed by permit or other authorization.

**2. Additions to the NFTS:** This alternative proposes to add approximately 40 miles of existing, inventoried unauthorized routes to the NFTS as trails and 6 miles as roads. This alternative proposes to add one area, totaling 6 acres, where use of motor vehicles by the public would be allowed anywhere within that area. There would be seasonal restrictions on all proposed additions to the system. Table 7, Table 8 and Table 9 display miles and acres of roads, trails and areas to be added into the NFTS, including the vehicle class and analysis unit. Seasonal use restrictions are displayed in Table 10. A complete table with each route listed is located in Appendix A.

**Table 6. Alternative 2 – Summary of Actions**

Action Type	Action Proposed
1. Cross-country travel	Prohibits cross-country motorized travel
2. Additions to the NFTS	
a. Trails added	40 miles of NFTS motorized trails (103 routes)
b. Roads added	6 miles of NFTS roads (33 roads)
c. Motorized Area(s) added	6.1 acres within one use area
3. Changes to the NFTS	
a. Vehicle Class (Changes to vehicle class from highway legal only to mixed use (both highway-legal and non-highway legal allowed))	Changes 0 miles of NFTS roads to operate as combined use roads under California State Vehicle Code 38026
b. Passenger car roads altered to meet high clearance conditions	Changes vehicle class on 40 miles of existing NFTS roads.
c. Passenger car roads not altered due to low mixed use safety risk (vehicle use changed from highway legal vehicle to all vehicle use)	0 miles
d. Season of use	Changes the season of use on 753 miles of existing NFTS roads (839 segments); as a result of these changes, 1014 miles of existing NFTS roads (1436 segments) will have seasonal open periods.
e. Prohibit use	Prohibits all vehicle use on 204 miles of existing NFTS roads (395 roads)
4. Non-significant Forest Plan (LRMP) Amendment	Of the proposed route additions, 0.77 miles would be designated within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum class Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized area

**Table 7. Alternative 2 – Miles of Road Added to the NFTS by Analysis Unit**

Analysis Unit	Miles of Unauthorized Roads Added	Number of Roads*
South Fork	.9	1
Globe	.4	1
Stump Springs – Big Creek	.03	1
Tamarack-Dinkey	3.8	25
Dinkey-Kings	.6	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>33</b>

**Table 8. Alternative 2 – Miles of Trails Added to the NFTS by Analysis Unit**

Analysis Unit	Proposed Trail Class Vehicle Use	Miles of Unauthorized Trails Added	Number of Trails
South Fork	Motorcycles	.7	2
Westfall	ATVs and Quads	14.2	33
	Motorcycles	2.2	5
	All Trail Class Vehicles	6.9	18
Globe	All Trail Class Vehicles	1.3	5
Gaggs	ATVs and Quads	2.0	3
	All Trail Class Vehicles	.3	1
Jose-Chawanakee	ATVs and Quads	2.3	2
Tamarack-Dinkey	ATVs and Quads	.9	4
	All Trail Class Vehicles	9.3	29
Dinkey-Kings	All Trail Class Vehicles	.3	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>40.4</b>	<b>103</b>

**Table 9. Alternative 2 – Season of Use (Proposed Addition of Use Area)**

Analysis Unit	Season of Use	Acres
Tamarack-Dinkey	2-May – 30-Nov	6.12

Table 10 displays the season of use proposed for unauthorized routes that would be added to the NFTS under Alternative 2. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of trails and a comparison of closures and vehicle use by alternative.

**Table 10. Alternative 2 – Season of Use Grouped by Date (Proposed Additionss of Unauthorized Routes)**

Season of Use		Length (miles)	Number	Addition to the System as a Road or Trail
From	To			
2-May	30-Nov	1.7	5	Road
2-May	30-Nov	24.7	58	Trail
21-May	31-Mar	0.1	1	Road
21-May	31-Mar	1.6	10	Trail
21-May	30-Nov	3.6	22	Road
21-May	30-Nov	6.8	18	Trail
16-Jun	30-Sept	0.2	2	Road
16-Jun	31-Oct	0.1	1	Road
2-Aug	31-Oct	0.1	1	Road
16-Aug	30-Nov	0.1	1	Road
16-Aug	30-Nov	7.0	17	Trail
<b>Total</b>		<b>45.8</b>	<b>136</b>	

### 3. Changes to the Existing NFTS

**Seasonal Restrictions:** This alternative proposes season of use restrictions on 1014 miles of existing NFTS roads. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of roads and season of use types. Table 11 displays the miles and number of roads proposed for each season of use.

**Table 11. Alternative 2 – Season of Use Grouped by Date (Existing NFTS Roads)**

Season of Use		Length (miles)	Number of Road Segments
From	To		
2-Apr	30-Nov	20.4	8
2-Apr	31-Dec	18.6	7
16-Apr	31-Oct	0.5	1
16-Apr	14-Dec	3.6	3
21-Apr	30-Sept	0.7	1
21-Apr	30-Nov	363.8	397
21-Apr	13-Jan	0.9	1
2-May	31-Oct	2.6	9
2-May	14-Nov	0.5	2
2-May	30-Nov	70.5	26
16-May	30-Sept	0.9	1
21-May	14-Nov	41.4	44
21-May	30-Sept	1.4	4
21-May	14-Oct	0.6	1
21-May	31-Oct	6.4	6
21-May	30-Nov	300.9	253
31-May	14-Sep	7.0	28
2-Jun	30-Sept	1.9	1
2-Jun	30-Oct	9.0	5
2-Jun	14-Nov	2.5	2
16-Jun	30-April	3.8	3
16-Jun	30-Sept	71.2	51
16-Jun	31-Oct	13.7	5
16-Jun	14-Nov	3.0	1
16-Jun	30-Nov	2.8	5
21-Jun	30-Sept	0.4	1
2-Jul	14-Oct	3.6	4
2-Jul	31-Oct	3.9	3
2-Jul	30-Nov	1.4	1
16-Jul	30-Sept	2.2	1
16-Jul	31-Oct	33.0	2
16-Jul	14-Nov	1.0	1
1-Aug	30-Sept	2.1	3
1-Aug	30-Nov	1.4	3
2-Aug	30-June	1.3	2
2-Aug	31-Oct	5.5	2
2-Aug	30-Nov	1.0	1
16-Aug	30-Nov	5.4	3
1-Oct	30-Sept	0.5	1
1-Oct	30-Nov	2.8	1
<b>Totals</b>		<b>1014.0</b>	<b>1436</b>

**Changes in Class of Vehicles:** Alternative 2 proposes to change the class of vehicle use on approximately 159 miles of roads. Alternative 2 would change 36 miles of roads currently open to all vehicles to roads open to highway legal vehicles only. Alternative 2 would also change 43 miles of roads open to highway legal vehicles only to roads open to all vehicles. Table 12 lists the vehicle class changes proposed under Alternative 2.

**Table 12. Alternative 2 – Proposed Changes in Vehicle Class, NFTS Roads**

Current Vehicle Class (Alt 1)	Proposed Vehicle Class	Miles	Number of Roads
All Vehicles Prohibited	All Vehicles (Mixed Use)	73	2
All Vehicles Prohibited	Highway Legal Vehicles	0	4
All Vehicles (Mixed Use)	Highway Legal Vehicles	36	18
All Vehicles	Less than 50"	7	7
Highway Legal Vehicles	All Vehicles (Mixed Use)	43	27
<b>Total</b>		<b>159</b>	<b>58</b>

Based on natural resource concerns (described for each road in the project record), Alternative 2 would prohibit motor vehicle use on approximately 204 miles of the current NFTS (as modified). Miles and number of proposed road closures are displayed in Table 13.

**Table 13. Alternative 2 – Proposed Closures, NFTS Roads**

Current Vehicle Class (Alt 1)	Miles	Number of Roads
All Vehicles	199.3	384
Highway Legal Vehicles	4.5	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>203.8</b>	<b>395</b>

**4. Non-significant Forest Plan Amendment:** Alternative 2 proposes a non-significant Forest Plan (LRMP) amendment to designate two trail additions to the NFTS (0.77 miles) within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized area as defined in the SNF Forest Plan (LRMP).

## Alternative 3

Alternative 3 responds to issues of impacts to natural and cultural resources and impacts to non-motorized recreational experience by prohibiting motorized cross-country travel without adding additional facilities to the NFTS. Alternative 3 meets the objective of prohibiting cross-country travel. This alternative also provides a baseline for comparing the impacts of other alternatives that propose changes to the NFTS in the form of new facilities (roads, trails and areas). No changes would be made to the current NFTS. None of the currently unauthorized roads, trails or areas would be added to the NFTS under this alternative. Table 14 describes the summary of actions proposed in Alternative 3.

**1. Cross-country Travel:** This alternative would prohibit motor vehicle travel off the designated NFTS roads, trails and areas by the public except as allowed by permit or other authorization.

**2. Additions to the NFTS:** No additions would be made to the NFTS under this alternative.

**3. Changes to the existing NFTS:** As in Alternative 1, no changes would be made to the current NFTS defined under the Sierra National Forest 1998 Road Closure Plan (as modified). Please see Appendix A for a complete list of roads and types and seasons of use.

**Table 14. Alternative 3 – Summary of Actions**

Action Type	Action Proposed
1. Cross-country travel	Prohibit motorized cross-country travel
2. Additions to the NFTS	
a. Trails added	None
b. Roads added	None
c. Motorized Area(s) added	None
3. Changes to the NFTS	
a. Vehicle Class (Changes to vehicle class from highway legal only to mixed use (both highway-legal and non-highway legal allowed))	No change from current management
b. Passenger car roads altered to meet high clearance conditions	No change from current management
c. Passenger car roads not altered due to low mixed use safety risk	No change from current management
d. Season of use	No change from current management
4. Non-significant Forest Plan (LRMP) Amendment	None

## Alternative 4

Alternative 4 responds to issues of impacts to natural and cultural resources and impacts to non-motorized recreational experience by prohibiting motorized cross-country travel and adding trails and roads in locations that avoid or mitigate for sensitive resources. Alternative 4 meets the objective of prohibiting cross-country travel. Added miles of NFTS roads provide access to dispersed recreation opportunities. Added miles of NFTS trails contribute to the following variety of riding experience: motorcycle (75 percent), ATV and quads (39 percent) and four-wheel drive, (54 percent). The range of motorized recreation difficulty is easy (72 percent), moderate (24 percent) and difficult (4 percent). In some areas there are opportunities for extended riding time with access to loops and a larger network of roads and trails. Seasonal and year round road closures are applied where needed for resource protection. Alternative 4 also proposes a non-significant Forest Plan (LRMP) amendment to designate two trail additions to the NFTS (1.64 miles) within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized area as defined in the LRMP (USDA-FS 1991). Table 15 describes the summary of actions proposed in Alternative 4.

**1. Cross-country Travel:** This alternative would prohibit motor vehicle travel off the designated NFTS roads, NFTS trails and areas by the public except as allowed by permit or other authorization.

**2. Additions to the NFTS:** This alternative proposes to add approximately 42 miles of existing, inventoried unauthorized routes to the NFTS as trails and 9 miles as roads. This alternative proposes to add 37.2 acres within 11 use areas for motor vehicle use. There would be seasonal restrictions on all but one proposed addition to the system. Table 16, Table 17 and Table 18 display the miles and acreage of roads, trails and area to be added into the NFTS including the vehicle class and analysis unit. Seasonal use restrictions are displayed in Table 19. A complete table with each route listed is located in Appendix A.



**Table 15. Alternative 4 – Summary of Actions**

Action Type	Action Proposed
1. Cross-country travel	Prohibits cross-country motorized travel
2. Additions to the NFTS	
a. Trails added	42 miles of NFTS motorized trails (96 routes)
b. Roads added	9 miles of NFTS roads (43 roads)
c. Motorized Area(s) added	37.2 acres within 11 use areas
3. Changes to the NFTS	
a. Vehicle Class (Changes to vehicle class from highway legal only to mixed use (both highway-legal and non-highway legal allowed))	Changes 0 miles of NFTS roads to operate as combined use roads under California State Vehicle Code 38026
b. Passenger car roads altered to meet high clearance conditions (vehicle use changed from highway legal vehicle to all vehicle use)	Changes vehicle class on 52 miles of existing NFTS roads
c. Passenger car roads not altered due to low mixed use safety risk	0
d. Season of use	Changes the season of use on 1404 miles of existing NFTS roads (1271 segments); as a result of these changes, 1530 miles of existing NFTS roads will have seasonal open periods
e. Prohibit use	Prohibits all vehicle use on 268 miles of existing NFTS roads (547 roads)
4. Non-significant Forest Plan (LRMP) amendment	Of the proposed route additions, 1.64 miles would be designated within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized area

**Table 16. Alternative 4 – Miles of Road Added to the NFTS by Analysis Unit**

Analysis Unit	Miles of Unauthorized Road Added	Number of Roads
South Fork	0.3	1
Westfall	2.4	10
Gaggs	1.9	9
Mammoth	0.1	1
Stump Springs – Big Creek	0.7	2
East of Kaiser Pass	0.8	6
Tamarack-Dinkey	1.7	10
Dinkey-Kings	0.7	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>43</b>

**Table 17. Alternative 4 – Miles of Trails Added to the NFTS by Analysis Unit**

Analysis Unit	Proposed Vehicle Use	Miles of Unauthorized Trails Added	Number of Trails
South Fork	ATVs and Quads	1.2	1
	All Vehicles	1.0	2
Westfall	ATVs and Quads	5.7	18
	Motorcycles	0.03	1
	All Vehicles	4.3	9
Globe	ATVs and Quads	0.5	1
	All Vehicles	3.3	10
Gaggs	ATVs and Quads	8.5	13
	Motorcycles	1.8	2
	All Vehicles	2.8	6
Mammoth	Motorcycles	1.0	1
Tamarack-Dinkey	ATVs and Quads	0.4	1
	All Vehicles	11.1	30
Dinkey-Kings	All Vehicles	0.3	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>41.9</b>	<b>96</b>

**Table 18. Alternative 4 – Season of Use Grouped by Date (Proposed Additions of Use Areas)**

Analysis Unit	Date Open	Acres
Westfall	8/15 – 12/1	26.0
	5/1 – 12/1	0.5
Gaggs	5/1 – 12/1	0.5
East of Kaiser Pass	5/30 – 11/15	0.3
Tamarack-Dinkey	5/20 – 12/1	3.5
	5/1 – 12/1	6.1
Dinkey-Kings	Open all year	0.1
	8/15 – 12/1	0.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>37.2</b>

Table 19 displays the season of use proposed for unauthorized routes that would be added to the NFTS under Alternative 4. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of trails and a comparison of season of use and vehicle use by alternative.

**Table 19. Alternative 4 – Season of Use Grouped by Date (Proposed Additions of Unauthorized Routes)**

Season of Use		Length (miles)	Number	Addition to the System as a Road or Trail
From	From			
2-May	30-Nov	4.4	23	Road
2-May	30-Nov	24.6	53	Trail
21-May	31-Mar	0.7	6	Trail
21-May	30-Nov	1.2	9	Road
21-May	30-Nov	10.5	25	Trail
2-June	14-Nov	0.8	6	Road
16-Jun	30-Sept	0.6	1	Road
2-Aug	31-Oct	0.4	1	Road
16-Aug	30-Nov	1.3	3	Road
16-Aug	30-Nov	6.4	12	Trail
<b>Totals</b>		<b>50.7</b>	<b>139</b>	

### 3. Changes to the Existing NFTS

**Seasonal Restrictions:** This alternative proposes seasons of use restrictions on 1530 miles of existing NFTS roads. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of roads types and seasons of use. Table 20 displays the miles and number of roads proposed for each season of use.

**Table 20. Alternative 4 – Season of Use Grouped by Date (Existing NFTS Roads)**

Season of Use		Length (miles)	Number of Road Segments
From	From		
2-Apr	31-Dec	18.9	8
2-May	30-Nov	953.6	872
2-May	14-Dec	22.9	5
21-May	31-Mar	7.1	3
21-May	30-Nov	290.9	240
2-June	14-Nov	41.2	43
16-Jun	30-Apr	5.1	4
16-Jun	30-Sept	90.9	75
16-Jun	31-Oct	18.7	10
1-Jul	30-Sept	17.7	11
2-Jul	31-Oct	12.8	7
1-Aug	30-Sept	5.3	5
2-Aug	31-Oct	33.9	4
2-Aug	30-June	1.6	2
16-Aug	30-Nov	9.3	9
<b>Totals</b>		<b>1530.0</b>	<b>1298</b>

**Changes in Class of Vehicles:** Alternative 4 proposes to change the class of vehicle use on approximately 175 miles of roads. Alternative 4 would change 42 miles of roads currently open to all vehicles to roads open to highway legal vehicles only. Alternative 4 would also change 52 miles of roads open to highway legal vehicles only to roads open to all vehicles. Table 21 lists the vehicle class changes proposed under Alternative 4.

**Table 21. Alternative 4 – Proposed Changes in Vehicle Class, NFTS Roads**

<b>Current Vehicle Class (Alt 1)</b>	<b>Proposed Vehicle Use</b>	<b>Miles</b>	<b>Number of Roads</b>
All Vehicles Prohibited	All Vehicles (Mixed Use)	70	15
All Vehicles Prohibited	Highway Legal Vehicles	4	2
All Vehicles (Mixed Use)	Highway Legal Vehicles	42	20
All Vehicles	Less than 50"	7	7
Highway Legal Vehicles	All Vehicles (Mixed Use)	52	32
<b>Total</b>		<b>175</b>	<b>76</b>

Based on natural resource concerns (described for each road in Appendix B) Alternative 4 would prohibit motor vehicle use on approximately 268 miles of the current NFTS (as modified). Miles and the number of proposed road closures are displayed in Table 22.

**Table 22. Alternative 4 – Proposed Closures, NFTS Roads**

<b>Current Vehicle Class (Alt 1)</b>	<b>Miles</b>	<b>Number of Road Segments</b>
All Vehicles	232.2	437
Highway Legal Vehicles	35.8	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>268.0</b>	<b>547</b>

#### **4. Non-significant Forest Plan (LRMP) Amendment:**

display miles and acreage of roads, trails and areas proposed to be added into the NFTS including the vehicle class and analysis unit. Seasonal use restrictions are displayed in Table 27. A complete table with each route listed is located in Appendix A.

**Table 23. Alternative 5 – Summary of Actions**

Action Type	Action Proposed
1. Cross-country travel	Prohibits cross-country motorized travel
2. Additions to the NFTS	
a. Trails added	71 miles of NFTS motorized trails (167 routes)
b. Roads added	14 miles of NFTS roads (62 roads)
c. Motorized Area(s) added	113 acres within 20 use areas
3. Changes to the NFTS	
a. Vehicle Class (Changes to vehicle class from highway legal only to mixed use (both highway-legal and non-highway legal allowed))	Changes 47 miles of NFTS roads to operate as combined use roads under California State Vehicle Code 38026
b. Passenger car roads altered to meet high clearance conditions (vehicle use changed from highway legal vehicle to all vehicle use)	Changes vehicle class on 165 miles of existing NFTS roads (130 roads)
c. Passenger car roads not altered due to low mixed use safety risk	47 miles
d. Season of use	Changes the season of use on 1551 miles of existing NFTS roads (1508 segments); as a result of these changes, 1600 miles of existing NFTS roads (1436 segments) will have seasonal open periods
e. Prohibit use	Prohibits all vehicle use on 155 miles of existing NFTS roads (368 roads)
4. Non-significant Forest Plan (LRMP) amendment	Of the proposed route additions, 1.64 miles would be designated within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized area

**Table 24. Alternative 5 – Miles of Road Added to the NFTS by Analysis Unit**

Analysis Unit	Miles of Unauthorized Road Added	Number of Roads
South Fork	1.6	2
Westfall	3.1	14
Gaggs	3.4	14
Mammoth	0.1	1
Stump Springs – Big Creek	0.8	3
East of Kaiser Pass	0.8	6
Jose-Chawanakee	0.9	2
Tamarack-Dinkey	2.5	14
Dinkey-Kings	1.1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>62</b>

**Table 25. Alternative 5 – Miles of Trails Added to the NFTS by Analysis Unit**

Analysis Unit	Proposed Vehicle Use	Miles of Unauthorized Trails Added	Number of Trails
South Fork	ATVs and Quads	1.2	2
	All Vehicles	1.0	1
Westfall	ATVs and Quads	16.8	44
	Motorcycles	3.3	9
	All Vehicles	8.3	22
Globe	ATVs and Quads	0.5	1
	All Vehicles	3.3	10
Gaggs	ATVs and Quads	8.7	14
	Motorcycles	1.8	2
	All Vehicles	5.9	12
Mammoth	Motorcycles	1.0	1
	All Vehicles	0.3	1
Jose-Chawanakee	ATVs and Quads	1.7	1
Tamarack-Dinkey	ATVs and Quads	0.8	3
	All Vehicles	13.8	37
Dinkey-Kings	ATVs and Quads	0.6	1
	All Vehicles	2.3	5
<b>Total</b>		<b>71.2</b>	<b>167</b>

**Table 26. Alternative 5 – Season of Use Grouped by Date (Proposed Additions of Use Areas)**

Analysis Unit	Season of Use	Acres
Westfall	16-Aug to 30-Nov	26.0
	2-May to 30-Nov	0.5
Gaggs	2-May to 30-Nov	3.1
	16-Aug to 30-Nov	68.8
East of Kaiser Pass	2-May to 14-Nov	2.3
Jose-Chawanakee	31-July to 30-Nov	0.7
Tamarack-Dinkey	21-May to 30-Nov	3.5
	2-May to 30-Nov	6.1
Dinkey-Kings	Open all year	0.1
	16-Aug to 30-Nov	1.1
	2-May to 30-Nov	1.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>113.1</b>

Table 27 displays the season of use proposed for unauthorized routes that would be added to the NFTS under Alternative 5. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of trails and a comparison of season of use and vehicle use by alternative.

**Table 27. Alternative 5 – Season of Use Grouped by Date (Proposed Additions of Unauthorized Routes)**

Season of Use		Length (miles)	Number	Addition to the System as a Road or Trail
From	From			
2-May	30-Nov	48.1	107	Trail
2-May	30-Nov	8.5	33	Road
21-May	31-Mar	1.0	7	Trail
21-May	30-Nov	2.3	16	Road
21-May	30-Nov	12.3	29	Trail
2-June	14-Nov	0.8	6	Road
16-Jun	30-Sept	0.6	1	Road
2-Aug	31-Oct	0.4	1	Road
16-Aug	30-Nov	10.1	24	Trail
16-Aug	30-Nov	1.7	5	Road
<b>Total</b>		<b>85.8</b>	<b>229</b>	

### 3. Changes to the Existing NFTS

**Seasonal Restrictions:** This alternative proposes season of use restrictions on 1600 miles of existing NFTS roads. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of road types and seasons of use. Table 28 displays the miles and number of roads proposed for each season of use.

**Table 28. Alternative 5 – Season of Use Grouped by Date (Existing NFTS Roads)**

Season of Use		Length (miles)	Number of Road Segments
From	From		
2-Apr	31-Dec	19.6	10
2-May	30-Nov	981.0	1017
2-May	14-Dec	23.3	6
21-May	31-Mar	7.1	3
21-May	30-Nov	300.2	256
2-June	14-Nov	41.4	44
16-Jun	30-April	5.1	4
16-Jun	30-Sept	91.4	77
16-Jun	31-Oct	18.7	10
1-July	30-Sept	17.7	11
2-Jul	31-Oct	12.8	7
1-Aug	30-Sept	6.6	7
2-Aug	30-June	2.9	3
2-Aug	31-Oct	33.9	4
16-Aug	30-Nov	31.6	46
16-Aug	31-Dec	3.0	2
2-Sep	30-Nov	3.9	6
<b>Totals</b>		<b>1600.3</b>	<b>1513</b>

**Changes in Class of Vehicles:** Alternative 5 proposes to change the class of vehicle use on approximately 302 miles of roads. Table 29 lists the vehicle class changes proposed under Alternative 5.

Under Alternative 5, 47 miles of roads will be managed as combined use which will be maintained for passenger cars, but allow for some ATV use under special circumstances (see Appendix I).

Alternative 5 would change 42 miles of roads currently open to all vehicles to roads open to highway legal vehicles only and 165 miles of roads open to highway legal vehicles only to roads open to all vehicles. In addition Alternative 5 proposes to operate 47 miles of roads open to highway legal vehicles only to allow limited OHV use under CVC 38026.

**Table 29. Alternative 5 – Proposed Changes in Vehicle Class, NFTS Roads**

Current Vehicle Class (Alt 1)	Proposed Vehicle Class	Miles	Number of Roads
All Vehicles Prohibited	All Vehicles (Mixed Use)	84	67
All Vehicles Prohibited	Highway Legal Vehicles	4	2
All Vehicles (Mixed Use)	Highway Legal Vehicles	42	20
All Vehicles (Mixed Use)	Less than 50"	7	8
Highway Legal Vehicles	All Vehicles (Mixed Use)	165	33
<b>Total</b>		<b>302</b>	<b>130</b>

Based on natural resource concerns (described for each road in the project record), Alternative 5 would prohibit motor vehicle use on approximately 155 miles of the current NFTS (as modified). Miles and number of proposed road closures is displayed in Table 30.

**Table 30. Alternative 5 – Proposed Closures, NFTS Roads**

Current Vehicle Class (Alt 1)	Miles	Number of Roads
All Vehicles	119.1	258
Highway Legal Vehicles	35.8	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>154.9</b>	<b>368</b>

**4. Non-significant Forest Plan Amendment:** Alternative 5 also proposes a non-significant Forest Plan (LRMP) amendment to designate two trail additions to the NFTS (1.64 miles) within the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) class Semi-Primitive, Non-Motorized area as defined in the LRMP.

## Part 3 – Alternatives Considered, but Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

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NEPA requires that Federal agencies rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives and briefly discuss the reasons for eliminating any alternatives or components of an alternative that were not developed in detail (40 CFR 1502.14). Public comments and internal scoping that suggested components of an alternative or alternatives, but were eliminated from further detailed analysis are briefly described below.

### Designate maximum number of routes

**Rationale for elimination:** Alternative 5 maximizes route additions based on public comments, placing particular emphasis on routes which provide access to key destinations, loops and connectors which provide longer riding time; routes which increase the diversity of opportunities for different vehicle classes (ATVs, motorcycles, full-size four-wheel drive); and routes that



provide semi-primitive riding experiences. In addition, Alternative 1 (no action) displays the effects associated with use of all existing unauthorized routes on the social, physical and biological environment.

## Focus on not designating those routes that are redundant or of low value

**Rationale for elimination:** The recreational value of a route was considered in all action alternatives, although these considerations were given more or less weight depending on the overall objectives and emphasis of the alternative. In Alternative 5, for example, the emphasis was on adding more unauthorized routes to the system as roads and trails—focusing on routes which form loops or connectors or those which can be managed as motorized trails for different types of vehicles. Alternative 4, on the other hand, adds fewer miles of routes to the system by avoiding more routes with existing or potential resource concerns, even those routes with known recreational value.

## Designate all routes currently used by motor vehicles unless causing “considerable effect” and maximize mitigation instead of not designating routes

To the degree consistent with the objectives of the alternative, the action alternatives prescribe mitigations to allow routes to be added to the system rather than not be designated for public travel. For example, Alternative 4 emphasizes eliminating or avoiding existing or potential resource impacts and does so by adding fewer routes (and therefore requires fewer mitigations) to the NFTS. Alternative 5, on the other hand, maximizes motorized recreation opportunities by adding more routes to the NFTS by specifying additional mitigations on those routes to reduce adverse effects.

## Identify “event only” routes and OHV special use permit areas

**Rationale for elimination:** Identification of ‘event only’ routes and special use permit areas is outside the scope of this analysis. Motor vehicle use off designated roads, trails and areas may be authorized by a contract, easement, special use permit or other written authorization issued under Federal law or regulation (36 CFR 212.51(a)(8); FSM 7716.2). Proposals for OHV events on or off designated routes are special uses that are considered separately, depending on the proposal and would be considered and analyzed consistent with Forest Service policy and the National Environmental Policy Act.

## Analyze designating a wide corridor for access to activities, such as dispersed use and camping

**Rationale for elimination:** The SNF route inventory identified most of the short spurs receiving motorized use and those spurs are under consideration in each of the action alternatives. As a result, designation of a wide corridor is not needed to provide motorized access to a diversity of dispersed recreation opportunities.

## Add routes to NFTS with conditional designation

**Rationale for elimination:** As described in the Mitigation Measures section of this chapter, Alternatives 2, 4 and 5 would open some high value routes to public use on the condition that prescribed mitigations are completed prior to actual designation (i.e., publication on the MVUM). Such pre-designation or “conditional” mitigations are assigned based on the severity of the effect, often to roads and trails that provide connectivity and important access for the transportation network.

## Decommission NFTS roads to reduce resource impacts

**Rationale for elimination:** Decommissioning is the act of rehabilitating (via ripping, revegetation, physical closure, etc.) a road or trail. Decommissioning existing NFTS roads is outside the scope of the Purpose and Need for this project which is focused on managing motorized recreation in accordance with the 2005 Travel Management Rule, 36 CFR Section 212. Subpart B. As described in Chapter 1 of this EIS, the Responsible Official has determined that existing NFTS roads and trails will not be considered for repair, reconstruction or decommissioning as part of this proposal. This action is not addressing the creation of a travel management plan, but rather deals specifically with Subpart B of the Travel Management Rule, which provides direction for a system of NFTS roads, trails and areas designated for motor vehicle use and the prohibition of motor vehicle use off designated roads, trails and areas. Subpart B is intended to prevent resource damage caused by unmanaged motor vehicle travel by the public. Therefore, any analysis of our existing system and comprehensive changes made to that system are beyond the scope of this current proposal. Road decommissioning, road construction and reconstruction are determined by factors beyond the scope of this proposal which is focused on motorized public use. Such factors include vegetation management, fuel treatment, prescribed fire management, access to private lands, special uses administration and a variety of forest management activities that are beyond the scope of this analysis. This project is strictly focused on reducing the impacts of unmanaged motorized recreation per Subpart B of the Travel Management Rule and is not intended to be a comprehensive reconsideration of the NFTS for all aspects of National Forest management.

## Part 4 – Comparison of Alternatives

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Chapter 3 describes the environmental consequences of the alternatives in detail. This section of Chapter 2 compares the alternatives by summarizing key differences between the alternatives.

**Table 31. Summary Comparison of Alternatives**

Item		Alt 1	Alt 2	Alt 3 <sup>2</sup>	Alt 4	Alt 5
Cross-country Travel		Continues (660,000 acres open to cross-country travel <sup>1</sup> )	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
Parking Off of NFTS Roads		No Restrictions	One vehicle length	One vehicle length	One vehicle length	One vehicle length
Trails Added to NFTS		0	40 miles (103 trails)	0	42 miles (96)	71 miles (167)
Roads Added to NFTS		0	6 miles (33 roads)	0	9 miles (43)	14 miles (62)
Areas Added to NFTS (for access to dispersed recreation areas including camping areas)		0	6 acres (1 area)	0	14 acres (7)	16 acres (20)
Areas Added to NFTS for ATV and High Clearance Vehicles		0	0	0	26 (4 areas)	100 acres (10 areas)
Trails and Areas Added to National Forest System	Roads Added Open to All Vehicles	0 miles	5 miles	0 miles	9 miles	14 miles
	Trails Added Open to All Trail Class Vehicles	0 miles	19 miles	0 miles	23 miles	35 miles
	Trails Added Open to ATV's and Quads	0 miles	19 miles	0 miles	16 miles	30 miles
	Trails Added Open to Motorcycles	0 miles	3 miles	0 miles	3 miles	6 miles
	<b>Total Additions</b>	<b>0 miles</b>	<b>46 miles</b>	<b>0 miles</b>	<b>51 miles</b>	<b>86 miles</b>
Open with Seasonal Restrictions	Existing NFTS Roads	472	1014 miles	472 miles	1530 miles	1600 miles
	Roads, Trails and Areas Added to National Forest System	N/A	46 miles of roads and trails; 6 acres of areas	0	51 miles of roads and trails; 37 acres of areas	86 miles of roads and trails; 113 acres of areas
Passenger Car Roads Altered to Meet High Clearance Conditions		0 miles	43 miles	0 miles	52 miles	165 miles
Passenger Car Roads not Altered to Allow Combined Use under CVC 38026		0 miles	0 miles	0 miles	0 miles	47 miles
<b>Total Miles of Roads Available</b>		<b>2291 miles</b>	<b>2012 miles</b>	<b>2291 miles</b>	<b>1972 miles</b>	<b>2113 miles</b>
<b>Total Miles of Motorized Trails Available</b>		<b>0 miles</b>	<b>40 miles</b>	<b>0 miles</b>	<b>42 miles</b>	<b>72 miles</b>
<b>Total Miles of Both Roads and Trails Available for Motorized Use (includes availability for parking one vehicle length from edge of roads and trails)</b>		<b>2291 miles</b>	<b>2052 miles</b>	<b>2291 miles</b>	<b>2014 miles</b>	<b>2185 miles</b>

1. 2005 inventory of routes estimated at 558 miles within 660,000 acres open to cross-country travel.

2. Current roads managed as trails will remain counted in this alternative if it is chosen.

## Summary Comparison of Alternatives by Environmental Effects

Table 32 displays a comparison of all five alternatives, by environmental effects.

**Table 32. Summary Direct and Indirect Effects of the Alternatives on Forest Resources**

Resource Area	Indicator	Alt 1 <sup>1</sup>	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5
Transportation Facilities (page 60)	Total annual maintenance cost for NFTS roads and routes	no change	- \$546,000	no change	- \$691,000	\$174,000
	Initial implementation costs	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$39,000	\$109,000
Recreation Resources (page 74)	Miles of roads available for non-highway licensed vehicles	1741	1431	1741	1332	1513
	Miles of primitive roads managed as trails	98	7	98	7	7
	Miles of motorized trails available	0	151	0	153	183
	Acres of land open to motorized cross-country travel	660,000	0	0	0	0
Visual Resources (page 120)	Number of key viewsheds that are or have the potential to be affected by motor vehicle travel (extent to which the proposed NFTS additions within sparsely canopy covered landscapes assigned the Retention and Partial Retention VQOs are visible from key viewsheds)	greatest potential for causing visual resources effects from 22 key viewsheds	no negative effects on visual resources from all key viewsheds	no negative effects on visual resources from all key viewsheds	no negative effects on visual resources from all key viewsheds	no negative effects on visual resources from all key viewsheds

Resource Area	Indicator	Alt 1 <sup>1</sup>	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5
Air Quality (page 156)	Impacts to air quality due to pollutants of concern or public health due to NOA	none	none	none	none	none
Cultural Resources (page 138)	Number of cultural resources at risk from ongoing use and of the total, the number with moderate or major severity of effect	236 total severity of effect not determined	7 total 5 moderate or major effect	0 total	12 total 0 moderate or major effect	27 total 11 moderate or major effect
Soil Resource (page 165)	Miles of routes with high potential for adverse effects to soils (red condition class) <sup>2</sup>	8.5	8.3	0	0.5	1.6
	Miles of NFTS native surface roads (on sensitive soils ) open year round	502	287	502	176	176
Water Resources (page 195)	Miles of routes and acres of areas available for motorized use in riparian conservation areas <sup>2</sup>	156 mi 208492 acres	10 mi 3 acres	0 mi 0 acres	11mi 3 acres	22 mi 7 acres
	Number of stream crossings on routes available for motorized use	2251	235	0	188	361
	Subwatersheds with Potential CWE Risk:					
	Low	15	9	21	16	17
	Moderate	5	2	3	2	3
	High	5	2	1	0	2

Resource Area	Indicator	Alt 1 <sup>1</sup>	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5
Geologic Resources (page 186)	Number of unauthorized routes (Alt 1) or added facilities that are within 0.5 miles of abandoned mine lands (AML)	612	34	0	4	20
Botanical Resources (page 263)	Determinations for TES <sup>3</sup> species					
	• No effect (TES)	10 S species	1 T species 1 E species 38 S species	1 T species 1 E species 37 S species	1 T species 1 E species 38 S species	1 T species 1 E species 34 S species
	• May affect but is not likely to adversely affect (TE)	1 T species 1 E species	No species	No species	No species	No species
	• May affect individuals, but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal listing or loss of viability (S) (*highest probability for negative effect)	34 S species	6 S species * <i>Peltigera hydrothyria</i>	No species	6 S species * <i>Yosemite lewisia</i>	10 S species * <i>Yosemite lewisia</i>
Noxious Weeds (page 311)	Number of noxious weed infestations within 200 ft of a proposed facility	Possible spread to all 660,000 acres and beyond	7	0	13	30
Terrestrial Wildlife (page 333)	Determinations for TES <sup>3</sup> species					
	• No effect (TES)	No species	VELB, Bald eagle (BAEA), Willow flycatcher (WIFL)	VELB, BAEA, WIFL	VELB, BAEA, WIFL	VELB, BAEA, WIFL
	• May affect but is not likely to adversely affect (TE)	Valley Elderberry Longhorn beetle (VELB)	No species	No species	No species	No species

Resource Area	Indicator	Alt 1 <sup>1</sup>	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May affect individuals, but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal listing or loss of viability (S)</li> </ul>	California spotted owl (CASPO), Northern Goshawk (NOGO), Great gray owl (GGO), American Marten (AMMA), Pacific Fisher (PAFI), BAEA, WIFL, Western red bat (WERB), Pallid bat (PABA)	CASPO, NOGO, GGO, AMMA, PAFI, WERB, PABA	CASPO, NOGO, GGO, AMMA, PAFI, WERB, PABA	CASPO, NOGO, GGO, AMMA, PAFI, WERB, PABA	CASPO, NOGO, GGO, AMMA, PAFI, WERB, PABA
Aquatic Biota (page 403)	Determinations for TES <sup>3</sup> species					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No effect (TES)</li> </ul>	No species	Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCUT)	LCT; California red-legged frog (CRLF); Foothill yellow-legged frog (FYLF); Relictual slender salamander (RSS); Mountain yellow-legged frog (MYLF); Western pond turtle (WPT); Yosemite toad (YT)	LCT	LCT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May affect but is not likely to adversely affect (TE)</li> </ul>	LCUT, CRLF	CRLF	No species	CRLF	CRLF

Resource Area	Indicator	Alt 1 <sup>1</sup>	Alt 2	Alt 3	Alt 4	Alt 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May affect individuals, but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal listing or loss of viability (S) (*highest probability for negative effect)</li> </ul>	FYLF*; RSS*; MYLF*; WPT*; YT*	FYLF; RSS; MYLF; WPT; YT	No species	FYLF; RSS; MYLF; WPT; YT	FYLF; RSS; MYLF; WPT; YT

<sup>1</sup> Although public use of all existing unauthorized routes would be allowed in Alternative 1, none of the routes would be added to the NFTS. Because these routes would not be part of the NFTS, they would not have any status or authorization as NFTS facilities, nor would existing resource concerns be mitigated.

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, 'miles of routes available for motorized use' refers to those unauthorized routes added to the NFTS in the action alternatives, not existing NFTS roads. For the no action alternative, this measure includes all unauthorized routes.

<sup>3</sup>T = Threatened, E = Endangered, S = Forest Service Sensitive